CLAIMS

1.   (Previously Presented) A method comprising:

receiving from a user at least one search criterion via an audio connection, the at least one

search criterion including a threshold for a quality of service rating;

presenting during the audio connection, a list of a plurality of service providers in an

audio form to the user according to the at least one search criterion;

determining a selection of the user for a selected service provider from the list;

during the audio connection, connecting the user with the selected service provider for a

live conversation via the audio connection;

detecting a completion of the live conversation between the user and the selected service

provider; and

while the user remains connected to the audio connection, prompting the user for the

quality of service rating for services rendered by the selected service provider in

response to a detected completion of the live conversation.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

converting the at least one search criterion from an audio form into a database query to

search the list of service providers, ~~comprising~~ comprising:

responsive to a voice entry of the at least one search criterion, converting the

voice entry into the database query utilizing interactive voice recognition

software; and

responsive to a keypad entry of the at least one search criterion, converting a signal

generated by the keypad entry into the database query utilizing a Dual Tone

Multi-Frequency (DTMF) decoder.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a request from the selected service provider for inclusion in a service provider database; and

when the selected service provider is approved for inclusion in the service provider database, generating a record in the service provider database, the record including provider information contained in the request, wherein the provider information includes a field of service, at least one of specific expertise of the selected service provider, and at least one language spoken by the selected service provider.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

billing the user for the live conversation with the selected service provider; and

compensating the selected service provider for the live conversation with the user.

5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the billing the user further comprises:

measuring a duration of the live conversation between the user and the selected service provider; and

calculating a billing amount for the user based on the duration of the live conversation and a time-based price charged by the selected service provider.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the billing the user further comprises:

calculating a billing amount for the user based on a flat fee charged by the service provider.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one search criterion is received as one of a voice request and a keypad entry response; and the at least one search criterion includes at least one of: a category of service providers, a service

provider price, service provider availability, service provider specific expertise, service provider language and a service provider minimum quality rating.

8.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing the user with an audio list of an array of fields of service available from an audio portal service provider system; and

providing the user with a unique audio field of service code corresponding to each field of service within the audio list of fields of service, wherein an keypad entry of a field of service code is received via the audio connection to select a desired field of service for the at least one search criterion.

9.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

recording the service rating provided by the user in a service provider database.

10.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein determining the selection of the user further comprises:

when the selection of the user includes a voice request, converting the voice request into a database query language format using integrated voice recognition software to determine the service provider selected by the user;

when the selection of the user includes a keypad entry response, converting a signal generated by the keypad entry response into a database query language format to determine the service provider selected by the user; and

querying a service provider database according to a query generated according to the selection to select the service provider desired by the user.

11. (Previously Presented) A computer readable storage medium including program instructions contained on a computer readable memory to direct a computer to perform a method, when the instructions are executed by a processor, the method comprising:

receiving from a user at least one search criterion via an audio connection, the at least one search criterion including a threshold for a quality of service rating;

presenting during the audio connection a list of a plurality of service providers in an audio form to the user according to the at least one search criterion;

determining a selection of the user for a selected service provider from the list;

during the audio connection, connecting the user with the selected service provider for a live conversation via the audio connection;

detecting a completion of the live conversation between the user and the selected service provider; and

while the user remains connected to the audio connection, prompting the user for the quality of service rating for services rendered by the selected service provider in response to a detected completion of the live conversation.

12. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises:

converting the at least one search criterion from the audio form into a database query to search the list of service providers, comprising:

responsive to a voice entry of the at least one search criterion, converting the voice entry into the database query utilizing interactive voice recognition software; and

responsive to a keypad entry of the at least one search criterion, converting a signal generated by the keypad entry into the database query utilizing a Dual Tone Multi-Frequency (DTMF) decoder.

13.   (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises:

receiving a request from the selected service provider for inclusion in a service provider database; and

when the selected service provider is approved for inclusion in the service provider database, generating a record in the service provider database, the record including provider information contained in the request, wherein the provider information includes specific expertise of the selected service provider, and at least one language spoken by the selected service provider.

14.   (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises:

billing the user for the live conversation with the selected provider; and

compensating the selected service provider for the live conversation with the user.

15.   (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 14, wherein said billing the user further comprises:

measuring a duration of the live conversation between the user and the provider; and

calculating a billing amount for the user based on the duration of the live conversation and a time-based price charge by the provider.

16.   (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 14, wherein said billing the user further comprises:

calculating a billing amount for the user based on a flat fee price charge by the provider.

17.   (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the at least one search criterion is received as one of a voice request and a keypad entry

response; and the at least one search criterion includes at least one of: a category of service providers, a service provider price, service provider availability, service provider specific expertise, service provider language and a service provider minimum quality rating.

18. (Currently Amended) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises:

   providing the user with an audio list of an array of fields of service available from the audio portal service provider system; and

   providing the user with a unique audio field of service code corresponding to each field of service within the audio list of fields of service, wherein ~~an keypad~~ a keypad entry of a field of service code is received via the audio connection to select a desired field of service for the at least one search criterion.

19. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein the method further comprises:

   recording the service rating provided by the user in the service provider database.

20. (Previously Presented) The computer readable storage medium of claim 11, wherein said determining the selection of the user further comprises:

   when the selection of the user includes a voice request, converting the voice request into a database query language format using integrated voice recognition software to determine the service provider selected by the user;

   when the selection of the user includes a keypad entry response, converting a DTMF signal generated by the keypad entry response into a database query language format in order to determine the service provider selected by the user; and

querying a service provider database according to a query generated according to the

selection to select the service provider desired by the user.

21.   (Currently Amended) An audio portal service provider system ~~comprises:~~ comprising:

an interface to an audio connection;

an audio recognition engine coupled to the interface to receive at least one search

criterion in an audio form from a user[[,]] via the audio connection, the at least

one search criterion including a threshold of a quality of service rating; and

a processor coupled to the audio recognition engine and the interface, the processor to

search a service provider database according to the at least one search criterion to

generate a list of a plurality of service providers for presentation to the user during

the audio connection, the processor to further determine a selection of the user for

a selected provider from the list via the audio recognition engine, [[and]] the

~~process~~ processor to cause the interface to connect the user with the selected

service provider for a live conversation during the audio connection, the processor

to detect a completion of the live conversation between the user and the selected

service provider and, while the user remains connected to the audio connection,

the processor to prompt the user for the quality of service rating for services

rendered by the selected service provider in response to a detected completion of

the live conversation.

22.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 21, further wherein:

the interface is coupled to the processor to provide the user with an audio list of available

fields of service providers, accept a field of service desired by the user, provide

the user with the list of service providers which match the at least one search

criterion and a field of service desired by the user, and receive a selection from

the user for the selected service provider.

23.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 21, further comprising:

a network interface coupled to the processor to receive a request from the selected service

provider of a field of service for inclusion in the service provider database, and

the processor to generate a record for storage in the service provider database, the

record including provider information contained in the request.

24.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the provider information

includes specific expertise of the service provider, and at least one language spoken by

the service provider.

25.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 21, wherein the interface comprises:

a telephone network interface;

wherein the processor searches the service provider database to generate the list of

service providers based at least partially on information indicating availability for

service providers to conduct live conversation.

26.   (Previously Presented) The system of claim 21, wherein the interface comprises:

a wireless communications network interface.

27-28. (Canceled)